

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6821

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, PFOR, NZ, CH

SUBJECT: CHINESE NUCLEAR TEST: KIRK STATEMENT

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER KIRK, JUNE 28, ISSUED STATEMENT OPPOSING NUCLEAR TESTING IN ATMOSPHERE BY ANY COUNTRY FOLLOWING NEWS OF CHINESE EXPLOSION. AT SAME TIME MFA DELIVERED PROTEST NOTE TO CHINESE AMBASSADOR AFTER SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING HIM TO ACCEPT IT. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED JUNE 28 BY PRIME MINISTER KIRK FOLLOWING CHINESE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION:

" NEW ZEALAND IS OPPOSED TO NUCLEAR TESTING IN THE ATMOSPHERE BY ANY COUNTRY", SAID THE PRIME MINISTER, RIGHT HON NORMAN KIRK, WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE NEWS REPORT THAT A FURTHER NUCLEAR WEAPONS TEST HAD BEEN CONDUCTED BY CHINA IN THE ATMOSPHERE. " WE BELIEVE THAT ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WHICH GIVES RISE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT IS A VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. INDEED, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE IS JUSTIFICATION FOR TESTING IN ANY ENVIRONMENT.

" IT IS A MATTER FOR THE DEEPEST REGRET THAT CHINA HAS FAILED TO RESPOND TO THE OVERWHELMING WEIGHT OF WORLD OPINION AND HAS SO FAR DECLINED TO BECOME PARTY TO THE PARTIAL TEST BAN TREATY.

" CHINA IS NOW PLAYING AN ACTIVE AND IMPORTANT PART IN THE WORK OF THE UN, AND IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS GENERALLY. ITS RECENT DECISION TO SIGN THE PROTOCOL TO THE TREATY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA HAS GIVEN RISE TO HOPES THAT CHINA MAY NOW BE READY TO JOIN IN LIMITING THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ALSO. BUT IT LOOKS AS IF THESE HOPES ARE PREMATURE.

" TESTS THAT GIVE RISE TO FALLOUT IMPOSE AN IMMEDIATE AND INTOLERABLE BURDEN ON OTHERS IN THE THREAT THEY PRESENT TO HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ANXIETY THEY CREATE. EVERY INTERNATIONAL BODY THAT HAS ANY RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FIELD OF RADIATION PROTECTION INSISTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LIMITING EXPOSURE OF INDIVIDUALS. WE INSIST ON IT IN OUR NATIONAL PRACTICE. NUCLEAR TESTING EXPOSES WHOLE POPULATIONS TO UNCONTROLLED RADIATION AND SOME PART OF THE DEBRIS IS EVENTUALLY SCATTERED ROUND THE GLOBE. IT IS A WILLFUL AND PERNICIOUS FORM OF POLLUTION OUTLAWED A DECADE AGO UNDER THE PARTIAL TEST BAN TREATY AND REPEATEDLY CONDEMNED IN WORLD BODIES.

" IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF HOURS SINCE I ADDRESSED A MESSAGE TO PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI AT THE SAME TIME AS I WROTE TO ALL HEADS OF GOVERNMENT URGING THE CESSATION OF ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

" WE ARE REGISTERING OUR FIRM PROTEST AGAINST THIS LATEST TEST BY CHINA IN A NOTE WHICH WILL BE CONVEYED TODAY THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. THE GOVERNMENT URGES CHINA AT A TIME WHEN THAT COUNTRY IS DEVELOPING ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LINKS WITH NEW ZEALAND AND WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, TO HEED THE VIEWS OF THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNITED NATIONS AS EXPRESSED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION NO 2934 A OF 29 NOVEMBER 1972, AND THE SPECIAL CONCERN OF THE PACIFIC PEOPLES THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING IN THE ATMOSPHERE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO AN END."

3. COMMENT: MERV NORRISH, DEPUTY SECRETARY, MFA, TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HAD EXPERIENCED SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING CHINESE AMBASSADOR PEI TSIE- CHANG TO ACCEPT PROTEST NOTE. PEI TOOK NOTE WHEN NORRISH HANDED IT TO HIM, THEN TRIED FOR SEVERAL MINUTES TO HAND IT BACK, SAYING HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF TEST BEING HELD. NORRISH ASSURED HIM THAT GNZ WAS PRETTY CERTAIN OF ITS FACTS. HE CONTINUED THAT GNZ HAD ISSUED STATEMENTS OPPOSING PREVIOUS CHINESE TESTS AND NOW THAT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED THE GNZ FELT A NOTE OF PROTEST WAS THE PROPER CHANNEL IN WHICH TO REGISTER OBJECTION. WHEN AMBASSADOR CONTINUED EFFORT TO RETURN NOTE, NORRISH POINTEDLY TOLD HIM IT WAS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE PROTESTING GOVERNMENT TO CHOOSE TIME AND METHOD OF PROTEST, NOT THE RECEIVING GOVERNMENT. WITH THIS PEI ACCEPTED NOTE.

WOOD

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